

Division of Consumer Affairs

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## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dec. 12, 1997

### **STATE FILES SUIT AGAINST DR. CHARLES HARLAN, FORENSIC PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATES, P.C. FOR DECEPTIVE ADVERTISING CLAIMS**

The Tennessee Attorney General's Office today filed suit on behalf of the Tennessee Department of Health and the Tennessee Division of Consumer Affairs against Dr. Charles Harlan and Forensic Pathology Associates, P.C. for allegedly representing Dr. Harlan as the State's Chief Medical Examiner.

The State noted in its complaint that Harlan's appointment as Chief Medical Examiner for the State was not renewed after June 30, 1995. Although Harlan has performed a number of autopsies under contract with various counties in Tennessee, he has not been affiliated with the State in any way since 1995.

The complaint alleges that the defendants have advertised Dr. Harlan as the State's Chief Medical Examiner numerous times and have ignored repeated warnings to stop. The defendants allegedly displayed a sign over their business identifying their office as that of the State Medical Examiner, advertised their business in the Yellow Pages and White Pages of the telephone directory as the State Medical Examiner's Office, and sent client billings using letterheads identifying Dr. Charles Harlan as the Chief Medical Examiner and his office as the State Medical Examiner's Office.

The State is asking that the Court order the defendants to stop engaging in the alleged acts in violation of the Tennessee Consumer Protection Act. The State also seeks reimbursement of the costs associated with the investigation and civil penalties of up to \$1,000 for each violation.